

Appl. No. 09/163,993
 Response dated April 12, 2005
 Reply to Office Action of January 12, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 239-272 are pending in the present application. Claims 1-238 were previously canceled without prejudice. No claims are amended herein.

Applicant respectfully requests re-examination and re-consideration of pending claims 239-272, in view of the following remarks.

I. Rejection of Claims 239, 246, 256 and 263 Based on 35 U.S.C. 102(e)

The Examiner has rejected independent claims 239, 246, 256 and 263 under 35 U.S.C § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,005,945 (Whitehouse). Applicant respectfully disagrees for at least the reasons discussed below.

A. Whitehouse Fails to Anticipate All Elements of Claims 239 and 256

With respect to the embodiments recited in claims 239 and 256, the Examiner states:

As per claims 239 and 256, Whitehouse clearly teaches an online processing method and system for processing postage indicia requests comprising:

- ...
- administrator system software executing on one or more computers, administrator system software in communication with said server system, said administrator system software comprising a

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statistical analysis report module configured to provide one or more reports about user transactions (See Whitehouse abstract, figures 4, 5A-5B and column 6, line 20 - column 7, line 12, column 7, lines 54-68, column 11, lines 60-68, and column 15, lines 60-68).[sic]

Applicant respectfully disagrees. Whitehouse does not teach or suggest, let alone anticipate the system element of administrator system software comprising a statistical analysis report module where the administrator system software is in communication with the server system, as recited in claim 239, nor the method element of administrator system software generating a report, as recited in claim 256.

Applicant submits that the abstract, figures 4, 5A-5B, column 6:20 through column 7:12 and column 7:54-68 of Whitehouse do not reference any administrator system software, statistical analysis report module or the generation of reports regarding user transactions.

Column 11, lines 60-68 of Whitehouse refer to a local transaction log and user balance kept at the customer PC. Whitehouse states that "this allows for rapid report generation and balance checking *without contacting the secure central computer.*" Whitehouse does not teach or suggest any specific mechanism for providing report generation, let alone a mechanism that is an element of administrator system software. In fact, as shown in the italicized

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portion above, Whitehouse teaches away from communication with a server system in connection with report generation. In contrast, claim 239 of the present application recites that the administrator system software is in communication with the server system, and the administrator system software comprises the statistical analysis report module. Claim 256 of the present application recites that the administrator system software generates the report.

Column 15, lines 60-68 of Whitehouse refer to an automatic comparison between a local balance and a central balance after each transaction. No reference is made to a report provided by a statistical reports module or administrator system software.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that Whitehouse fails to teach, suggest or anticipate the embodiments respectively recited in claim 239 and claim 256 of the present application.

B. Whitehouse Fails to Anticipate All Elements of Claims 246 and 263

With respect to the embodiments recited in independent claims 246 and 263, the Examiner states:

As per claims 246 and 263, Whitehouse clearly teaches an online processing method and system for processing postage indicia requests comprising:

- ...
wherein said server system comprises:
- ...

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- a user account interface module configured to respond to an account request received from a given client system by retrieving a portion of said stored account information that is associated with a respective user of said given client system and providing said portion to said given client system (See Withehouse abstract, figures 4, 5A-5B and column 6, line 20 - column 7, line 12, column 7, lines 54-68).

Applicant respectfully disagrees. Whitehouse does not teach or suggest, let alone anticipate the system element of a user account interface module as recited in claim 246, nor the method element of responding to an account request from a client system by retrieving stored account information from a database in the server system, as recited in claim 263.

Applicant submits that the abstract, figures 4, 5A-5B, column 6:20 through column 7:12 and column 7:54-68 of Whitehouse discuss handling of postage requests, but do not teach or suggest the processing of an account request from a client system. The user account information at the central server is used for validating postage requests, not for sending account information to the customer computer. As taught at column 11, lines 60-66 of Whitehouse, the customer computer maintains a local copy of the current balance and a transaction log, to avoid any communications with the central server to obtain account information. Thus, Whitehouse teaches away from the user account interface module recited

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in claim 246, and the element of responding to user account requests as recited in claim 263.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that Whitehouse fails to teach or suggest, let alone anticipate, the invention embodiments recited in independent claims 239, 246, 256 and 263. The rejection being traversed, Applicant submits that claims 239, 246, 256 and 263 are allowable over the cited art. Further, dependent claims 240-245 and 257-262, being dependent upon allowable base claims 239 and 256, are also allowable for at least the foregoing reasons.

II. Rejection of Claims 240-245, 247-255, 257-262 and 264-272

Based on 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner has rejected claims 240-245, 247-255, 257-262 and 264-272 based on 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,005,945 (Whitehouse) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,752,950 (Le Carpenter). Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Applicant submits that claims 240-245 and 257-262, being dependent upon respective allowable base claims, are also allowable for at least the reasons provided in section (I)(A), with respect to independent claims 239 and 256.

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With respect to independent claims 247 and 264, Applicant submits that the combination of Whitehouse and Le Carpenter fails to teach or suggest the recited embodiments for at least the reason that Whitehouse and Le Carpenter fail to teach or suggest a statistical reports module on the server system, as recited in claim 247, or the provision of reports that are accessible by a separate postal service system through an interface, as recited in claim 264.

As the Examiner states, Whitehouse is not clear and specific regarding a statistical reports module configured to provide reports associated with usage of said on-line postage system by said one or more users. However, Applicant submits that, contrary to the Examiner's assertion, Le Carpenter does not teach the limitation recited.

Le Carpenter teaches a three tier system for management of franking machines, where data is passed up the tiers to a top tier central station. The top tier central station, which is not the same as the server system of the present claims, generates cumulative totals and journals based on the information obtained from the tier below (see column 9, lines 30-41 of Le Carpenter). As taught by Le Carpenter, the top tier central station, in which the journals and cumulative totals are generated, belongs to the Postal Administration (see column 2, lines 19-20 of Le Carpenter). Thus, the combination of Le Carpenter and Whitehouse, assuming such a combination were possible, would result in

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the generation of journals and cumulative totals in the postal authority (i.e., USPS) system.

In contrast, claim 247 of the present application recites a server system, apart from the Postal Authority (i.e., postal service system), that comprises a statistical reports module interfacing with a postal service interface module. Likewise, claim 264 recites the generation of reports apart from the postal service system, where those reports are accessible by a postal service system through an interface, as opposed to Le Carpenter's technique of generating journals directly within the postal service system (i.e., Postal Administration central station). Thus, the combination of Whitehouse and Le Carpenter does not teach or suggest the embodiments recited in claims 247 and 264 of the present application.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that independent claims 247 and 264 are allowable over the cited references. In addition, dependent claims 248-255 and 265-272, being dependent upon allowable base claims, are also allowable for at least the foregoing reasons.

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III. Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that the Examiner's rejections of the pending claims have been traversed. The present application is therefore in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: April 12, 2005

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, Art Unit 3600, at telephone number (703) 872-9306, on the date specified below:

Todd N. Snyder April 12, 2005
Signature: Todd N. Snyder Date